

Adoptive Family Support Network

(FY 2022 Appropriation Act - Public Act 87 of 2021)

March 1, 2022

Sec. 559. *(1) From the funds appropriated in part 1 for adoption support services, the department shall allocate \$250,000.00 to the Adoptive Family Support Network by December 1 of the current fiscal year to operate and expand its adoptive parent mentor program to provide a listening ear, knowledgeable guidance, and community connections to adoptive parents and children who were adopted in this state or another state.*

(2) The Adoptive Family Support Network shall submit to the senate and house appropriations subcommittees on the department budget, the senate and house fiscal agencies, the senate and house policy offices, and the state budget office by March 1 of the current fiscal year a report on the program described in subsection (1), including, but not limited to, the number of cases served and the number of cases in which the program prevented an outof-home placement.



Adoptive Family Support Network

PARENT TO PARENT

Parent to Parent (P2P) provides a listening ear, knowledgeable guidance and community connections to any adoptive family living in Michigan at no charge. Services are provided through trained staff and volunteer parent leaders, located throughout Michigan and offering a wide variety of personal adoption experience.

WHEN SHOULD YOU REACH OUT?

Contact us anytime 24/7 you have a question or want to connect, such as:

PEER SUPPORT Is there an adoptive parent leader or a support group near my county?

REFERRALS Can you help me find a therapist or other specialists with experience in adoptive issues?

RESOURCES Are there supports available in my community for my adoptive family? I would like to request a resource from AFSN's lending library.

ADVOCACY How do I obtain the help my child needs in school? I want to attend a P2P leadership training.

BEHAVIOR What can I do when my child is exhibiting difficult behaviors (mood swings, temper, disobedience, etc.)?

GRIEF & LOSS How can I navigate this difficult time for myself and my child?

IDENTITY How do I answer my child's questions about his/her identity at different stages or ages?

COMMUNITY CONNECTION How do I get more information about upcoming fun events and trainings for my family?



For more information, visit dabsj.org and search "P2P".



MDHHS

This program is funded by the Michigan Department of Human Health Services

This report is being submitted in fulfillment of the legislative directive in Public Act 87 of 2021, Sec. 559.

AFSN & PARENT TO PARENT MENTORING

Through your support, AFSN expanded services statewide with the Parent to Parent (P2P) mentor program since 2014. The P2P program has a specialized focus on supporting adoptive, kinship and guardianship families with children who may have been impacted by the trauma from early childhood abuse and neglect. AFSN provides peer mentoring, support groups, education, advocacy, and family engagement to create a community that supports the lifelong wellbeing of adoptive families. To date, AFSN has trained 96 volunteer adoptive, kinship and guardianship parent mentors to provide peer support in their communities throughout Michigan.

AFSN gained accreditation through the National Council on Accreditation (COA) for Counseling, Support and Education Services in 2018. This accreditation signifies that an organization or program, such as AFSN, is effectively managing its resources and providing the best possible services to all its stakeholders. The program's staff and 96 volunteer parent mentors are located throughout Michigan and are well connected to resources in their communities. This promotes their ability to support, coach and advocate for the services families need.

*"Kiddos that are adopted out of foster care deserve all the support they can get, and so often the families are left with kids that have extraordinary needs and very little access to resources. AFSN has been a valuable resource for me and other adoptive families, connecting us with resources, training, and maybe most importantly support."
- Adoptive parent, supported by P2P*

The P2P Program was serving more than 3,500 adoptive, kinship, and guardianship families annually when it was faced an abrupt and unexpected closure as result of PA 67 of 2019. Funding was ultimately restored through PA 166 of 2020-21, sec. 559, and D.A. Blodgett - St. John's began the process of rehiring staff and reopen services of both AFSN. The Program reopened December 1, 2020 and served 1906 unduplicated families from 81 counties in the 2021 calendar year.

Public Act 87 of 2021, sec. 559 provided \$250,000 for AFSN and the Parent to Parent Mentor Program in FY22. To date, AFSN and the P2P mentor program has already served 1104 unduplicated families from 72 counties from Oct/21- Jan/22. The P2P Program's goal remains to limit out of home placements (residential treatment), disrupted adoptive placements and dissolved adoptions; supporting children to continue their healing at home. It is with your continued support that Services and support remained available to Michigan adoptive, kinship and guardianship families.

As outlined in Sec. 559 (2) The Adoptive Family Support Network shall submit to the senate and house appropriations subcommittees on the department budget, the senate and house fiscal agencies, the senate and house policy offices, and the state budget office by March 1 of the current fiscal year a report on the program described in subsection (1), including, but not limited to, the number of cases served and the number of cases in which the program prevented an out-of-home placement.

In the first 120 days of FY22 (Oct. 1, 2021 – Jan. 31, 2022) AFSN Successfully Provided:

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION THROUGH P2P

1. Phone (Warmline) – Non crisis line for information, referral and support available by:
 - a. Calling 855-MICH-P2P
 - b. Email AFSN@dabsj.org
 - c. Direct Messaging via AFSN Facebook Page
2. Website – Parent to Parent on dabsj.org which included the development and monitoring of:
 - a. Statewide Support Group Registry – 140 groups searchable by county
 - b. Updated community events calendar
3. Social Networking
 - a. Facebook Page – 4,325 followers
 - b. Virtual Kinship Care Parent Network of Michigan – 241 group members
 - c. Virtual Adoptive, Kinship, Guardianship Network – 3501 group members
4. Assistance connecting families to appropriate community resources – 246
5. Assistance connecting families to trained parent mentors in their community – 48
6. Lending Library – 290 mixed media resources available – 40 resources mailed

FAMILY SUPPORT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH P2P

1. Monthly group events for adoptive/guardianship/kinship families. Examples include, but not limited to:
 - a. Frederick Meijer Gardens Family Meet Ups – 14 events
 - b. Virtual Trauma Training (2 sessions)
 - c. Together Facing the Challenge (TFTC) parenting series
2. Support Groups – Currently 5 staff lead in person support groups in addition to virtual groups
3. Training, recruitment and retention events for parent mentors –
 - a. Virtual Event- to re-engage and educate them on supports available to through the P2P program.
 - b. In person training of new Kinship Adoptive Parent Consultant
4. Technical assistance for trained parent mentors interested in providing support in their communities. Examples of assistance provided include, but not limited to:
 - a. Virtual Adoptive/Kinship/Guardianship Group for Parent Mentors – statewide
 - b. Heart Moms Support Group- Traverse City
 - c. Kinship Dome Day 2022 preparation
5. Participation of AFSN staff on boards, coalitions and training. Examples include, but not limited to:
 - a. MDHHS Foster/Adoptive/Kinship/Guardianship Coalition
 - b. MDHHS Adoption Oversight Committee & Post Adoption Sub-Committee
 - c. MDHHS Kinship Caregiver Coalition member & Policy Sub-Committee Chair
 - d. ACMH Parent Advisory Council

"The adoption of our fourth child would have been disrupted if we had not made the contacts we did through AFSN."

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In the first 120 days (Oct. 1, 2021 – Jan. 31, 2022), Indicators of P2P Success include:

CLIENT SATISFACTION & PREVENTION OF OUT OF HOME PLACEMENT THROUGH P2P

Quarterly Client Satisfaction Survey Responses Showed:

1. 100% all adopted children under 18 remained living in their home while receiving support from AFSN. * We recognize there are indeed families not directly working with AFSN who have children not remaining in their home. We are currently looking for new ways to find this information.
2. 100% strongly agreed or agreed that AFSN staff is knowledgeable about community-based resources and support for adoptive families.
3. 90% reported feeling more able to access support and resources for their family since connecting with AFSN.
4. 99% reported feeling that staff are sensitive to the needs of their family.
5. 100% reported feeling that AFSN staff treated their family with dignity and was respectful of their culture and background.

“I was having a rough time, especially with my youngest, they listened. I didn't ask for advice and they didn't tell me what I should be doing. I so appreciated that! I know what I SHOULD be doing, but I am exhausted and needed a safe place to vent so I could get back to a place where I had the energy to do those things that they have taught me in the past.”

- Adoptive parent supported by the P2P program

TOP REASONS FAMILIES CONTACTED THE P2P PROGRAM

1. Seeking Support or Connection to Similar Families
2. Lending Library or Resource Request
3. Assistance with Child's Challenging Behaviors
4. Seeking a Parent Mentor

ADOPTIVE, KINSHIP AND GUARDIANSHIP FAMILY DEMOGRAPHICS

FY22 (Oct 1, 2021 – Jan. 31, 2022)

1. 1104 unduplicated adoptive/kinship/guardianship families from 71 counties
 - a. 238 new families receiving AFSN services for the first time
2. Type of Families Identify As:
 - a. 68% foster to adopt families
 - b. 22% kinship and guardianship families
 - c. 13% private domestic and international adoptive families
3. 1735 individual contacts (averaging 1.6 hours of direct service per family)
 - a. Numbers do not include additional support received inside social medial groups without direct contact with an AFSN staff member.

FY21 (Dec. 1, 2020 – Sept 30, 2021)

1. 1666 unduplicated adoptive/kinship/guardianship families from 81 counties
 - a. 724 new families receiving AFSN services for the first time

"This small group of passionate, caring people are able to reach SO many people. They enable connections, both in person and online, that create, broaden and strengthen support in physical, emotional and practical ways. Those same connections help to dispel the sense of isolation that is so prevalent within families raising children with challenges like trauma backgrounds and behavioral issues. They are relevant, knowledgeable, and timely."

